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Flood preparation underway

by THOMAS SMITH
Times Staff

A public information session was held on Jan. 29 at the Minden Hills Community Centre in regards to flood preparation in the region. The session was presented in partnership by Haliburton County, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) and Kawartha Conservation as a chance for residents of Haliburton County to experience a brand new floodplain mapping tool.

In addition to demonstrating to residents how to use the online tool, Cory Harris, the watershed services coordinator, presented on the value of Haliburton County's Floodplain Mapping Project.

"The purpose of this information session is to get the word out about what we have been doing all these years," said Harris in a private interview, prior to the presentation.

Harris says that it is very important to be aware of flood risks in your area. "Look up the area, try to understand what depths of flood mapping is in your area," he said. "Make a plan as to what to do with flooding. Sandbagging and flood-proofing renovations are key things to consider."

Dozens of Haliburton County residents lined up to search their properties using the new floodplain tool.

In the presentation, Harris assured that the residents of Haliburton County have become well versed in flood preparedness, response and recovery, but one lacking area

see SPRING page 2

County pivots to a new way to ink this year's budget

by JAMES MATTHEWS
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The first draft of Haliburton County's capital and operating budget this year has a tax increase of almost eight per cent.

The total levy required to maintain county services in 2024 is $23,621,264. That's a $2.04-million levy increase over 2023 and represents an increase of $18.41 for every $100,000 assessed property value.

That means, according to the current draft, rate payers will face a 7.8 per cent tax increase over last year.

That's down from an initial 10.44 per cent tax increase when the county's senior managers began discussion of this year's expenditures.

Andrea Robinson, the county's corporate

see INFLATION page 2

Howling over bowling

Brodie Mason shares a smile with bowling convenor Janice Diamond at Fast Lane Bowling in Minden during their annual Red Wolves versus Haliburton County Huskies game on Jan. 24 in Minden. For more photos, see inside this issue of the *Times*. /TIM YANO Special to the *Times*

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Spring thaw brings flooding concerns

from page 1

was mitigation.

"The new model can be updated with important information, such as prioritizing culverts that are pinch points, we can map flood routes for emergency services," he noted.

"Its genesis came about after a number of flooding events in the community. We are getting flooded repeatedly, what steps can we do? You know what areas are going to flood," explained Harris, "and it makes it more resilient."

The primary method of surveying and mapping the rivers and lakes was with Light Detecting and Ranging (LiDAR). Using airplanes with specialized surveying equipment, an accurate map improved upon the information from a 1986 survey. The first phase of the project commenced in 2018 in which the County applied for federal funding. After a successful application, the LiDAR data was acquired in 2019, and finally delivered in 2020.

"With good information we can make good decisions," says Harris, "if emergency services know how a flood will progress through a community, they will know what doors to knock on first."

This floodplain mapping will likely have an impact on insurance rates in the future.

"Once finalized, and implemented, and stamped," said Harris. "Insurance companies will likely want to know this information." Harris was unsure as to what extent this floodplain mapping will exactly have on previously existing insurance policies.

"If you see stuff that doesn't look right," pleads Harris, "we want to know about it." The floodplain mapping tool can be explored online. In addition, Ganaraska Conservation has requested that if anyone sees an area that you know has flooded in the past and is not represented on the digital floodplain, to please contact Ganaraska Conservation at info@grca.on.ca

Comments on the floodplain will be accepted until Feb. 29, 2024.

Cory Harris, the watershed services coordinator for Ganaraska Conservation, demonstrates the floodplain mapping online service that went live on Jan. 29. /THOMAS SMITH Staff

Inflation affects budgeting, says CAO

from page 1

services director, delivered the budget's first draft to council when it met Jan. 24.

Preparing the county's 2024 operating and capital budget was a different chore than previous years because of changes in the province and the county in recent years.

Gary Dyke, the county's CAO, said the work done by his predecessor, Mike Rutter, made his transition into the role smoother. But it was a task to identify existing areas of growth that are necessary to sustain the level of service.

More importantly, county staff have been working to address questions of future capital investment needs of roads and bridges.

"But also on the operational side," he said. "How we evolve the operations of the (county) to meet up with the new demands and new regulations we are facing going forward."

One of the greatest budgetary challenges this year was the oppressive inflation rates that have ballooned over the last few years. Some of the things bought by the county such as gasoline and construction materials saw inflation rates of 16 to 20 per cent.

"They were making it quite difficult for us to move forward with our budget," Dyke said. "It's very important for us to look at what makes up the budget and how we go forward with the budget."

To that end, staff developed a new format that moved the budget away from reading spread sheets toward a more narrative means that describes components of the spending plan.

"One of the most important things, if not the most important thing we do on any given cycle is making sure that everybody understands what we're talking about," he said. "Getting away from accountant terminology."

The 2024 budget is broken down to overarching themes: Base level of service, things that need adjusting, line items pre-approved by council, catchup items, and growth items.

"We are also looking at dealing with things around capital budget forecasting," Dyke said.

There's a prioritization of spending within the budget, he said.

"There's a lot of things we either had in the budget or would like to have in the budget but, from a prioritization standpoint, there are other things that need to be done now versus later," he said.

"That's kind of the balance that we have. It's not that we're abandoning certain things. We're actually prioritizing when that spending happens."

Councillor Murray Fearrey, the mayor of Dysart, said he's happy with the new approach.

"It's sure nice to get the paper that you can look at and rationalize other than a bunch of figures," he said.

Coun. Bob Carter, the mayor of Minden Hills, asked about the means used to determine the size of the budget's monetary slices.

Robinson said those are percentages of the tax levy based on figures provided by departmental senior staff.

"That's their portion of the levy," she said.

"That's their portion of the levy based on what you've included in the budget," Carter said.

"Correct," Robinson said. "Currently the net revenue and expenses for each division within the 2024 budget right now. That is what would be required from the levy for each one of those."

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MH firefighters give smoke alarms to households

by JAMES MATTHEWS
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Minden Hills Fire Department aims to make residents SAFE.

The department presented the Smoke Alarms for Everyone (SAFE) program to township council in September 2023. Since then, questions about insurance liability and tracking statistics have been clarified.

Deputy Fire Chief Rob Thibert said during council's Jan. 25 regular meeting that the township is covered liability-wise to endorse the program and the Fire Protection and Prevention Act will protect staff from liability.

The Smoke Alarm Assessment Form has been updated to better track information for statistics.

"These statistics will gage the needs of our community to identify high risk areas and where the fire department should focus more attention and resources with the promotion of fire prevention and the SAFE program," Fire Chief Shain Duda wrote in a report to council.

Further, the department has received a pair of donations of 250 smoke alarms and a monetary sum to help launch the program.

"We're just looking for direction to move forward with this free program for our municipality," Thibert said.

A working smoke alarm is a basic, fundamental requirement for home fire safety.

The SAFE program educates the community about the importance of smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in homes, trailers, and cottages; regular maintenance of those alarms; and home escape planning.

The program will be a one-year pilot project.

The goal is to supply and install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in owner-occupied households that are not equipped with a working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms when attending fire calls, during fire prevention week, other public education drives, or by request.

The program will be free and residents will be able to request a SAFE program check on the website or a request form. The request form will be available at events, the Fire Hall and through referrals by a community partner such as the Haliburton County Community Paramedicine Program and the Minden Community Food Centre.

Factoring in travel time across the township, and time on site, it is estimated this could take two hours per occurrence. This cost is approximately $98 in labour plus fuel. These costs can be included as part of the monthly reporting during the pilot program.

Deputy Mayor Lisa Schell said the fire department did a similar program about 10 years ago and it was great for residents who couldn't afford to get a smoke alarm. Or a resident was given one if firefighters were at a scene that didn't have an alarm.

"It was a good program," she said.

"Does this include hardwired (alarms) or just battery-operated," said Councillor Ivan Ingram.

Thibert said a wired smoke alarm has to be installed by a qualified electrician.

Coun. Tammy McKelvey asked if the municipality received the 250 smoke alarms for free or if the township is buying them at cost.

Thibert said a pallet of smoke alarms was donated and the department has the backing of two community partners for support as well.

"So, yeah, we do have them for free currently," he said. "And there are programs that we can apply to throughout the year to receive free smoke alarms as well to support this further."

"I don't think our fire department should be in the business of installing smoke alarms," said Coun. Bob Sisson.

Thibert said the Fire Protection and Prevention Act states that the department has to have a fire prevention program in place for the municipality.

"And a smoke alarm program is one of the listed items that they suggest that we do," he said. "Minden Hills is not a stranger to fatal fires."

MH takes positive message from municipalities gathering

by JAMES MATTHEWS
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Minden Hills got a heads up about new provincial programs coming down the pipe that may contribute to assuaging some of its local needs.

The Rural Ontario Municipal Association's annual conference was held in Toronto Jan. 21-23. Mayor Bob Carter was among the crowd who attended and got the opportunity to bend the ears of Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Paul Calandra, Infrastructure Minister Kinga Surma, and Health Minister Sylvia Jones.

Carter said one of their reasons going to the ROMA conference was to ask about the means to transfer Crown lands easily and economically to a municipality for the purposes of infrastructure or building housing.

One of the big challenges is that, even if you get Crown land transferred to you, it comes down to the price point.

Carter said he's aware of one municipality that lobbied the province for a small piece of Crown land. The parcel was a small piece that would have completed a property being developed.

"It was still Crown land, but it was the corner of a piece of Crown land," he said. "They said, you know, could you put it over to us so we can expand the subdivisions that are there. (The province) said absolutely.

"That sounds like a wonderful idea. We reckon it's about $6 million for this piece of land."

He said there needs to be something that can be done, a better way of transferring land already owned by the people of Ontario to a municipality. The provincial government is rolling out a new process for that with the possibility of land transfers to private individuals.

All the standard environmental studies will still be required. But the private individual will need to have the municipality's support, he said.

"If somebody came to us and said they wanted to build a subdivision on Crown land that we were supporting it, well then the government would look at that much more favourably than if we'd said no," Carter said.

> "Now everything is so damn expensive it's hard to pay it back within 30 years"
>
> — MAYOR BOB CARTER

Carter said his delegation approached Surma about funding from new programming. Infrastructure Ontario is the primary municipal source of coin for roads and housing.

They're going to roll out some new programming that will cater to housing and water-related projects, Carter said. The maximum borrowing term from the ministry is 30 years.

"They're looking at extending that because now everything is so damn expensive it's hard to pay it back within 30 years," Carter said.

Jones and her staff informed municipal representatives that there's new health funding programs in the offing.

"We are in a situation where, in the last decade or so, the population of Haliburton County has moved from 17,000 up to 21,000," he said. "We had 14 doctors. We now have eight. They will be going down in the near future because of retirements.

"We have to find a way to get new doctors. There's a couple of new things going on. It was actually a really well-received delegation."

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CULTURAL CENTRE

The Agnes Jamieson Gallery is currently displaying selections from the permanent collection, including new acquisitions by André Lapine ARCA (1866-1952). The exhibit will be on display until February 3.

Archie Stouffer Elementary School presents their 1st annual student exhibit with the theme of what Minden means to the artist. The exhibit will be on display in the Gallery from February 10 to March 30. All are welcome to the opening reception on February 10 from 1-3 pm.

The Agnes Jamieson Gallery is open to the public Tuesday – Sunday from 10 am – 4 pm. Admission is by donation. For more information, please call 705-286-3763 or email culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca.

Family Day fun at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre on Monday, February 19 from 12 – 2 pm. Pop by for some hands-on activities, check out our latest exhibits, find a treasure at the Friends of the Haliburton County Public Library Book Sale and grab a bite to eat from the Rotary Club of Minden. All welcome, admission by donation. For more information, please call 705-286-3763 or email culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca.

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- Let ashes from your woodstove or fireplace cool before emptying them into a metal container with a tight-fitting lid and keep the container outside.
- Always use a fire screen in front of a fireplace
- Burn dry, well-seasoned wood in fireplaces and woodstoves to reduce the risk of excessive creosote build-up in chimneys.
- Keep space heaters at least one metre or three feet away from anything that can burn, including curtains, upholstery, and clothing.

https://www.ontario.ca/page/fire-safety-home

WINTER PARKING

From November 1st, 2023 to April 30th, 2024 overnight parking is illegal from midnight to 8:00 AM on all township roadways and parking lots. Parking in the turning circle of a cul-de-sac is prohibited during all hours. Vehicles parked in areas that interfere with snow removal operations will be towed away and/or ticketed at the owner's expense.

VIRTUAL, IN-PERSON COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted with a hybrid model of in-person (Council Chambers) and electronic participation in accordance with the Municipal Act. Meetings begin at 9:00 AM unless otherwise noted. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

February 1 – Special Meeting of Council
February 5 – Special Meeting of Council
February 8 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link on the Township CivicWeb Portal at mindenhills.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingTypeList.aspx. Visit our website for more information.

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SNOW REMOVAL

Pushing snow across roads and streets is a safety hazard and is against the law. The Highway Traffic Act states no person shall deposit snow or ice on a roadway without permission in writing from the road authority responsible for maintenance of the road.

Two municipalities give green burial the green light

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Editor

Winter months provide more challenges than just snow removal and ice days; they also pose the question of what happens to a body when it can't be buried. "Cremation has rocketed in our area," said Terry Moore, the president of the Haliburton Highlands Green Burial Society (HHGBS). "Because really, why would you buy a plot of land to be buried in that you can't use them half the year?"

Traditionally, our local municipal cemeteries close their gates "from frost to thaw," as Moore says. This is due to a number of reasons; primarily the challenges around digging into the ground while it's frozen, as well as the staffing and maintenance capacity of township workers.

The lack of access to an in-ground burial results in many folks opting for a cremation, even if this isn't their preference. Yet cremation is estimated to produce 535 pounds of carbon dioxide; polluting our planet and contributing to the ongoing build up of air toxins.

That is why Moore and the HHGBS have been working diligently to offer access to cemeteries and green burial options year-round. This includes options for winter burials, in an effort to eliminate the need for cremations. "New plot sales have fallen off the cliff," Moore said, "because people are realizing that they can't access them half the year. That's why the options have to be available all year."

Winter burial is done in many other communities across the country, and with these experiences, comes a series of experts who have shared their knowledge with Moore and his team. As a result, Moore has brought these frequently asked questions to municipal councils. "We wanted to share the best practices, so that we can offer the best and most recent updates from people who are in the field," he said.

The primary concern for winter burials that stem from sitting councils seem to be the shoulder seasons, said Moore, noting that maintenance during the winter months in cemeteries is not traditionally done. This would require staff, as well as the knowledge to utilize the winter burial equipment so that it does not damage the surface underneath the snow.

Yet there are ways around this, such as outsourcing companies who specialize in such care. "We could bring in people who have done this before," said Moore, "and there could be a mobile unit that could go anywhere in the county."

Moore noted that while some municipalities are receptive to the idea of green burials and exploring options for winter burials, others are not. "It's funny, the two smallest municipalities are on board, but there's been no movement within the bigger ones," he chuckled.

Currently, Algonquin Highlands has given the green light to move ahead with green burial options at their St. Stephen's cemetery, and the details are being finalized. "We are beginning to make that turn from policy conversations, to operational details needed to make it work," said Moore, adding that he is hopeful that internment rights will be available for a green burial in AH starting this summer.

Highlands East isn't far behind, with interest in allowing green burials at their Deer Lake Cemetery. Moore said that some of the details are still in the works surrounding the logistics of the space, but he is optimistic as well that the idea will take seed.

As for Minden Hills and Dysart et al, Moore recognizes that a lot of the holdback seems to be surrounding their staffing shortages. "No one is looking for more work," he said. And while Minden previously offered some interest over the green burial initiatives back in 2020 when Mark Coleman sat at the head of community services, minimal progress was made since he left the township. "And there is no real interest in Dysart," said Moore, hoping that some mindsets may shift with time.

For now, Moore and the HHGBS are eager to work with the townships who have expressed interest, and hopeful that this will be the year that the green burial initiatives take shape; minimizing environmental impact, and offering access to those interested in the greener plots. They have recently received their charitable status; legitimizing their efforts, and offering tax receipts to those interested in donating to the cause.

For more information, visit www.haliburtongreenburial.ca.

Gettin' a noseful

Tammy Nash snapped this photo of a pine marten, who she affectionately refers to as "Dean", who resides on her property on Algonquin Highlands. /Photo submitted

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Hike Haliburton, an immersive winter experience

by **VIVIAN COLLINGS**
Times Staff

Pack up your snowshoes and head over to Hike Haliburton's website - there are only a few days left to sign up for an expert-guided winter romp in the Highlands!

Of 12 hikes scheduled for the festival's winter edition on Saturday, Feb. 3, four are already full, and organizers say it's a year you won't want to miss.

"Imagine seasoned hike leaders, some naturalists, others storytellers, guiding eager participants through public and private properties, unveiling the hidden treasures of the Highlands," read a Hike Haliburton statement. "They share tales that bring the landscape alive, making it more than just a walk; it's an immersive journey into the heart of Haliburton's rich cultural history."

After 20 years of success with Hike Haliburton in the fall, "we thought snowshoeing in the winter would be just as fun," said Eric Casper, tourism assistant for the County.

Starting in 2020 and taking a couple years off during the pandemic, this will be the third year for the winter edition.

The organizing team over at the County have added a few new hikes along with some original favourites.

"A new one we have this year is led by the Algonquin Yeti Paddling Company. There are four in Haliburton Forest, and they were not part of it last year," said Casper.

There will be three held in the Queen Elizabeth II Wildlands Provinical Park, and one hike, Operation Get Home Safe, is being hosted by the local army cadet corps at the Haliburton Highlands Museum.

All are led by volunteers with expertise in their field, are of varying difficulties, and some are even pet friendly.

Angelica Ingram, the County's tourism manager, participated in the Bethel Heights Farm hike last year with her family.

"They have a hobby farm, so the animals were a destination on the hike. It was so great for kids. My girls loved it so much," Ingram said.

In addition to the listed hikes, Ingram shared some other happenings in the Highlands this weekend under the "Events and Happenings" tab on their website.

"We get a lot of winter enthusiasts that come to the area whether it's sledding, cross country skiing, or other hikers. We actually have a 3.5 kilometre snowshoe trail at Sir Sam's, but even though there is no guided leader to take you, it's open and people can do a self-guided tour there," Ingram said.

Other self-guided hikes include two at Abbey Gardens.

The Agnes Jamieson Gallery, Rails End Gallery and The Space in Haliburton have exhibits featured, and there's plenty of live music around town to listen to while you warm up after a day outside.

"This festival isn't just a tourist attraction, it's a lifeline for various organizations and businesses in the region," says the statement. "This festival isn't just about hikes, it's about fostering a sense of belonging, supporting local causes, and creating lasting memories."

All hikes are free of charge.

To sign up for a hike or learn more, visit winter.hikehaliburton.com/hike-registration.

letters to the editor

Support needed for farmers' market

To the Editor,

As a faithful Farmers' Market attendee over the years, and in view of the recent controversy regarding Dysart Council's plans to impose fees to the Haliburton County Farmers' Market in a return to Head Lake Park, I find charging any fee out of touch with reality.

A prime example comes from the results of a survey, conducted by HCFM and other Farmers' Markets in Ontario, which states that the majority do not pay any fees to their local municipality. In one case (Newmarket Farmers' Market), Newmarket provides the town square for free and sponsors their Farmers' Market to the tune of $3,000 each year. I think Newmarket gets it.

Any proposed fee would add to the cost of approximately 40 vendors who already pay HCFM a seasonal participation rate of $425. Whether it's an annual fee of $4200 or $5 a vendor, per occasion, both the need and the intent are extremely questionable. The mayor has been quoted as saying that council will consider implementing fees for other events on a case-by-case basis. One is led to question just what the deciding factors will be, and will this be a transparent and fair process or will it be at the whim of the mayor and council?

The significant decrease in traffic at Rotary Park Beach last year resulted in most Tuesday markets being noticeably empty, compared to previous years in Head Lake Park. Vendor sales were off by as much as 30% and, according to the BIA, this had a corresponding impact on many retail businesses and restaurants in Haliburton Village.

These are compelling facts and solid reasons for Council to forego any proposed fee for a return to Head Lake Park.

The Farmers' Market, in most people's opinion, is not only a great opportunity to showcase our homegrown products but, in addition, it is an integral part of boosting the local economy and attracting visitors to the Highlands. The Farmers' Market should be given our full support, without strings attached.

Dave Allen
Haliburton

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'Where's the button for leave me alone?'

See you soon

I'VE BEEN keeping a secret.

Well, as much of a secret as you can when you have a very public-facing job and are active on social media. So really, not much of a secret.

But some of you may not know.

I haven't been alone in my stories for the past nine months. When I've gone to town halls and summer fairs and holiday concerts, I've brought a friend with me.

He's been pretty quiet; really only making his presence known with a few swift kicks to the ribs, a growing belly, and a noticeable increase in washroom visits. But for the most part, he's been a pretty happy camper.

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

And in a few short hours/days/weeks (yes, we've hit that point of uncertainty on this journey), he will be joining me in the daylight.

To be bringing a child into this world; a world where we have cruelty and famine and wars and sexism and bullies and just a whole lot of questions that may never be answered; it doesn't always feel good. It often feels scary. Weird. Maybe even crazy.

And to do it as a woman? To make the choice of having a child, knowing full well that in whatever capacity I am doing it, it will change the trajectory of my life forever. I will be removing myself from certain roles in the community, stepping away from this job I have poured my heart and soul into, and taking time to not only nurture and grow a healthy child, but to simultaneously nurture and grow myself. That's no easy feat.

It's not easy to step away. Over the past year with the *Minden Times* and the *Haliburton Echo*, I have watched our communities evolve, change, and grow. I have witnessed joy, uncertainty, sadness, connections, warmth, and love. I have met people who are changing our world, and written stories on people who have left it, but not before making their mark on the hearts of so many. I have seen new businesses open; the sparkle in their eyes and the hope for the future, and I have watched businesses close their doors for good; feeling too tired to even lift a towel to toss.

I've seen changes.

And that's all this is. A change. For now. If our community can evolve, change, and grow, then so can I.

I am leaving the paper in perfectly good hands. Thomas Smith will be stepping into the role of editor of the *Minden Times*, and a writer for the *Haliburton Echo* for the next year, and with it, he brings a new spin to the paper, and a thirst for showcasing the stories of our town.

I'll be back eventually. You may even see me dabble a little here and there, while I'm taking the time to focus on my growing family.

And this little human who has joined me on this journey; who has already quietly attended town halls and summer fairs and holiday concerts, he will be so lucky to come into a community that is built on resilience, on support, on connections. Knowing that, it makes it all seem less scary. Less weird. And definitely less crazy.

I can't wait to see all your friendly faces again, but this summer, I won't have a notebook and a camera hanging on my shoulder. Instead, it'll be a little boy propped on my hip, with a sparkle in his eye for all the magic Minden has to offer.

I'll see you soon.

A cure for loneliness

I WAS WATCHING a TV show about the epidemic of loneliness we are dealing with these days. It was sad, but the good news is that the experts offered several practical solutions – one of which should have been not to watch a show this depressing with your partner, because mine immediately left.

In any case, I applaud these people and others for tackling the issue and trying to help people who are isolated. No one should feel that way.

This got me thinking that, while they did a pretty good job, the one thing they missed was two cures for loneliness that ice anglers have known about for years.

STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

The first one is go out on the ice and catch a fish. It doesn't matter if you are fishing on a forlorn wilderness lake miles from the nearest road with not a single person in sight, if you catch a fish, you will be surrounded by other anglers within minutes. Size matters in this case too.

If the fish you caught is small, your new friends will start drilling holes far enough away from you so as not to encroach, but near enough that they can yell, "What did you catch it on?" If the fish is large, however, they will be able to whisper this to you.

How effective is this?

Well, when you see an ice fishing village on a big lake, and wonder why it is in that spot, it is probably because one person caught a little fish there three minutes prior to your arrival.

Another effective way of combatting loneliness on a lake is to go out with a power auger that won't start. Whenever fellow anglers see this, they have no choice but to go over and help diagnose the problem. They cannot help themselves.

You see, ice anglers are naturally drawn to the sounds of a colleague yanking futilely on a pull cord and wheezing. This is an evolutionary response from back in the day when wheezing signified the angler was so out of shape that you could steal their spot.

Regardless, I have seen anglers traverse entire lakes just to have the opportunity to utter the words, "It sounds like its flooded." Or, "Have you checked the spark plug?" Which seems especially odd when they are troubleshooting a battery powered auger.

Others, me included, who have even less mechanical aptitude, will also offer sound advice like, "Have you tried reasoning with it?"

Deep down, we know this approach does not work. But we also know that just offering advice is enough to qualify us to be part of the maintenance team that eventually takes credit for getting the auger started.

Typically, gatherings like this eventually morph into animated discussions which can be summed up by the sentence, "They don't make them like they used to."

And many great friendships have been built on less.

Most often however, these gatherings of wannabe backyard mechanics resemble support groups – which is often just what a lonely ice angler needs.

I get that being alone on a big lake in winter is not an ideal cure for loneliness. But at least you will probably be surrounded by other anglers in similar circumstances, most of whom would probably welcome a bit of conversation.

Consider it cold comfort.

InOtherWords

Columns and Letters to the Editor

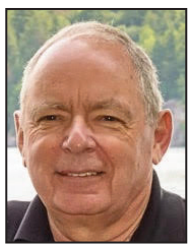
Will rainbows replace the snow?

If you think this winter and last were strange, you "ain't seen nothin' yet."

Our winters are going to get warmer and wetter, the wet becoming more rain as temperatures slip above the cold needed to make snow

Environment Canada, which has been collecting data from across the country for more than 50 years, has found that most of its weather stations have seen a decline of winter snow on the ground.

The agency took part in a major study that estimated Canada-U.S. snowfall declined by 4.6 billion tons a year between 1980 and 2020. The melt from that amount of annual snow would have filled two million Olympic-size swimming pools.



JIM POLING SR.
From Shaman's Rock

The rising world temperatures responsible for less snow are predicted to continue for many years. Environment Canada says our country is warming at roughly double the global rate, and even faster in the North.

Between 1948 and 2016 average temperatures in Canada increased roughly 1.7 degrees Celsius. Our national average temperature in 2022 was 1.2 Celsius above average.

"Whether you're a farmer or whether you're managing tourism assets, one of the things that we've said for quite some time is look, 500 km or 1000 km south." Professor Daniel Scott, a climate change specialist at the University of Waterloo, has said. "That's what your winter will look like in a couple of decades."

Also, it's becoming less likely that folks in some Canadian cities will wake up to a snowy Christmas morning.

For instance, the likelihood of a snowy Christmas holiday season in Toronto between 1960 and 1984 was 56 per cent. However, between 1997 and 2021 that likelihood fell to a startling 40 per cent.

Some good news does come with warmer, wetter winters. Although there will be less snow, the rain will bring more rainbows. Northern areas of Canada are expected to see the greatest increase in rainbows as warming temperatures bring rain showers that once would have been falling snow.

Rainbows are seen by many people as signs of hope, harmony and peace. During the COVID-19 pandemic households around the world displayed homemade rainbow images in their windows.

Christians and Jews find spiritual meaning in rainbows, reminding both religious groups that God promises to never again create an Earth-destroying flood.

In the biblical Noah's Ark story God shows Noah a rainbow and says: "Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds I will remember my covenant."

For many North American Indigenous Peoples the rainbow is a connection to the spirit world. The Anishinaabe who occupied areas north of the Great Lakes called the rainbow a rain snare that cut off rain from hitting the ground.

There probably is no place where rainbows are more revered than Ireland. They symbolize good fortune and each rainbow's end is believed to hold a pot of gold guarded by a clever leprechaun.

An Irish legend tells of when Vikings occupied Ireland and looted many of the country's treasures. When they eventually left the island they inadvertently left behind some of their booty, which was found by leprechauns.

The little people mistrusted all humans so buried any recovered booty as pots of gold, which could be found at the ends of rainbows. Anyone who dreamed of finding a pot of gold looked for a rainbow's end.

No one has ever found one because rainbows have no ends.

Rainbows are really optical illusions. They are formed when raindrops act as little prisms that split light into bands of colour. Those colours come from millions of raindrops that sit in the sky at different angles.

If you walk toward a rainbow the raindrop angles change. The optical effect moves as you move so you never get to see the end of it. Also, rainbows are actually full circles so their bottom halves are obscured by the Earth's surface.

Sometimes a full rainbow can be seen while flying in an airplane with the sun on one side and lots of rainfall in clouds on the other.

Although warmer winters are bringing more rain and the problems it creates, they are compensating us with the beauty of more rainbows, and the dream of someday finding gold at the end of one.

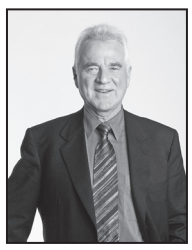
Canada's economic pillars are on shaky ground

CANADIANS ARE feeling increasingly pessimistic about their financial well-being – and for good reason.

A new national survey from Pollara released last week confirmed that nearly one out of every two Canadians said they expect their household income to drop this year, with a majority of Canadians saying they are "worried" about their personal finances.

What's keeping Canadians up at night?

According to the survey, it's the high cost of groceries, which is taking a bigger and bigger bite out of everyone's paycheque. Many mothers and fathers throughout the country go to bed every night worried about having enough money to feed their families. That should never happen in a country as rich as Canada.



FRANK STRONACH
Principles

But it's not just higher grocery bills eating into the take-home pay of most Canadians.

Higher taxes are also making Canadians poorer. A whole slew of new taxes are scheduled to take effect this year, including higher taxes for Employment Insurance and the Canada Pension Plan, as well as added taxes on gasoline and home heating.

If all those extra taxes weren't bad enough, we got news last week that the quarterly federal debt payment in Canada hit an all-time high. According to Statistics Canada, Ottawa spent over $11 billion in the third quarter of the current fiscal year.

In plain terms, it means that ten cents out of every dollar of revenue the government collects is now going to pay interest on the debt. The national debt is a runaway freight train heading for the cliff – and few people are sounding the alarm. The worst part is that we have no plan in place for tackling the debt.

When you add all of these factors together, on top of a chronically feeble economy, it's hardly surprising that Canadians are growing poorer and poorer year by year.

And the reason why is that Canada's economic fundamentals are all on shaky ground.

As we head into the new year, deteriorating consumer confidence and lower consumer spending will hurt small business the most. It seems that small business always gets the short end of the stick.

When it comes to taxation or regulation or economic policies, the rules are almost always slanted in favour of big business. And yet it's small business that shoulders most of the load when it comes to creating jobs and developing new products and technologies. It's baffling that such a large, fundamental chunk of our economy is routinely neglected.

We need to create a more level playing field that unshackles small business and gives them the opportunity to flourish. And we need to firm up the other pillars of our economy so that Canadians can enjoy higher living standards.

A national economic charter of rights and responsibilities would accomplish this. The charter would require government to pay down the debt over twenty years, reduce spending by a specific percentage each year, and cut red tape. It would also require the government to reform our tax system by making it simpler, more transparent, and fairer. In short, it would establish the strong, solid foundation necessary for our economy to grow.

An economic charter would also ignite our economy by giving millions of Canadians the chance to participate in profit sharing, by removing income tax and reducing the regulatory burden on small business so they can thrive and grow, creating new jobs and new wealth that will benefit all Canadians.

Until we shore up our crumbling economic pillars, the vast majority of Canadians can expect living standards to continue to erode.

Author Bio

Frank Stronach is the founder of Magna International Inc., one of Canada's largest global companies, and was inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame.

fstronachlpc@gmail.com

HCPL's Book of the Week

What are you looking for?

This is the famous question routinely asked by Tokyo's most enigmatic librarian, Sayuri Komachi. For anyone who walks through her door, Komachi can sense exactly what they're looking for in life and provide just the book recommendation they never knew they needed to help them find it.

Each visitor comes to her library from a crossroads in their careers and dreams, from the restless sales attendant who feels stuck at her job to the struggling working mother who longs to be a magazine editor. The conversation that they have with Sayuri Komachi—and the surprise book she lends each of them—will have life-altering consequences.

What You Are Looking For Is in the Library by Michiko Aoyama is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library.

Minden Memories

The Scotch Line School S.S. #2 Church Service in Minden. A similar replica can be found onsite at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre. School houses were often made available for Sunday church services, which was a common practice in rural areas prior to churches being built. /Photo submitted by the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

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Seniors Chair Exercises
When: Thursdays, at 1 p.m.
Where: St. George's Anglican Church, 617 Mountain Street
Safe and gentle exercises for seniors to help with balance, strength and flexibility. Free to join.

Cribbage and Euchre
When: Tuesdays at 2 p.m.
Where: St. George's Anglican Church, 617 Mountain St.
Please join us Tuesdays for cribbage and Euchre at St. George's Anglican Church. With funding from the Government of Ontario. Please contact lynnhiggsthompson@haliburtonanglican.ca for more information.

Super Cash Calendar Draws
When: Second Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m. January until October.
Where: Haliburton Legion
Three tickets pulled per night. First ticket winner receives $100, second ticket $200, and third ticket $500. Winners will be posted every month on www.haliburtonlions.com. Public is welcome to attend the draws at the Lions meetings.

Weekly Meat Rolls

When: Every Saturday, 3 p.m.
Where: Coboconk Legion, Hwy 48 & 35
Join us for our weekly meat draw at the Coboconk Legion. 5 spins for $10. The first 4 rounds are for highest and lowest score with 2 winners per round. The last round is for a prepare-it-yourself dinner for two. Additional spins for this round are available for $2 each. Call 705-454-8127 or email info@coboconklegion.ca for more information.

Minden & District Horticultural Society Annual Pot Luck
When: Feb. 3, noon
Where: Our Lady of Fatima Church, 7 Bobcaygeon Rd. Minden
Please bring your own mug, plate, and utensils for the lunch. Lunch will be followed by a presentation by our guest Speaker Marilyn Bodogh, 'Hearts and Flowers'.

Lift Your Spirits! An Afternoon of Music with Drew Allen
When: Saturday, Feb. 3, 2 to 4 p.m.
Where: Highland Hills United Church, 21 Newcastle St., Minden
Drew will be performing uplifting tunes for all ages, from Billy Joel to Gershwin, Bach to Disney. Tickets $20 in advance, $25 at the door. Family tickets $50. Light refreshments will be served, as well as a bake sale. This is a fundraiser for the church's elevator fund. Tickets online at eventbrite.ca (search for Lift Your Spirits and enter Minden as the location).

YUK YUKS Comedy Night
When: Saturday, Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m.
Where: Coboconk Legion, Hwy 48 & 35
Join us at The Coboconk Legion on February 3rd for a live event featuring some great stand-up comedians from Yuk Yuk's Comedy Club. Tickets in advance $40. Please call 705-454-8129 or email info@coboconklegion.ca for more information.

Mothers and daughters

IN SO MANY of the memoirs I read about caring for parents with dementia, the adult daughters talk about discovering their mothers in the course of the conversations that caregiving entails. Or enables. Or requires. And in so doing, the daughters have enriched their understanding of themselves. Elizabeth Hay in All Things Consoled parses the family dynamics. Jann Arden in *Feeding My Mother* begins to understand the complexities and cost of being responsible for the daily care of others, begins to comprehend why, or maybe how, her mother hung in with an abusive alcoholic husband for many years, including his late dry years where dementia took over making, him a curmudgeon, a reality that Jann needs to accommodate as part of caregiving.

FAY MARTIN
Poke, Peel, Pair, Ponder

I've previously suggested inter-generational conversations should be part of the aging agenda, independent of caregiving responsibilities. There's a rhythm to relationships between parent and child. In infancy and early childhood it's total dependence, when the parent's life is determined by the child's needs. This is followed by a decade or two of the struggle for independence, when the parent is hopelessly useless except when they're not. Then come the adult years when paths diverge in every which way – geographically, philosophically, psychologically, and sociologically. Then the relationship is tipped by events or circumstances into the later years, when to some extent the adult child must pay attention to the wellbeing of the parent. (Or not: that happens.)

The Wren, The Wren by Booker prize winner and Irish novelist Anne Enright, published 2023, exemplifies what can be learned from investigating family relationships. It is a brilliantly written, head-spinning foray into all that is involved in relationships, the spine of which is the mother-daughter relationship between Nell, probably a millennial, as she leaves the home of Carmel, her always-single mother, to make her way in the world. Add Carmel's perspective, as she recreates her life around the absence of her daughter, in the context of her mother, Terry, beguiled into marriage by the beautiful words of a penniless Irish poet who became a national treasure, while visiting occasionally and unpredictably the responsibilities of husband and father. Phil the poet, such is the power of his thumbprint, becomes a stand-in for the impact of patriarchy on relationships. (As mostly manifest in sex, which we can't go into here.)

Patriarchy is omnipresent in relationships. Male-female relationships for sure, although not exclusively. But mother-daughter relationships are different. Phil the poet left when Carmel was 12, explaining to the world that his wife became ill (she 'lost' a breast) and the relationship didn't survive. Carmel absorbs into her bones the unreliability of men and refuses to build her life on one. When Nell is born, conceived by a transient man of Carmel's choosing, 'she did not give it to any man. That would be like holding it out at arm's length and dropping it right there, on to the concrete…[T] his baby was hers and hers alone.' Nell embraces the absence of men by falling hopelessly in love with a psychologically and physically abusive man. Eventually, fleeing the tentacles of addiction to his narcissism and unreliability, she bumps into a guy who allows her to (re)disover the part of her that climbed into her mother's bed on a Sunday morning and talked about stuff, sees her old guy as a reincarnation of her grandfather without the patina of poetry, and brings her new guy home to meet her mom.

Almost all of the details of these women's relationship journeys ring bells for me in my life and those of my mother, and my daughters, and a host of women confidants. Fathers who drop babies on to the concrete. Obsession masquerading as love. Lust justifying its categorization as a Deadly Sin. Women filling an absence with approximate reincarnations. Women talking about stuff before they progress to having sex. Or maybe talking instead of having sex.

But mostly what resonates is the tyranny of the mother-daughter tie. For better or worse. We cannot choose our mother and we cannot choose our daughters, but we are beholden to the connection. And we are all complex creatures living in times that move swiftly, which is why it behooves us to find out as much as we can about who our mothers/daughters are, the forces in life that shaped them as they form and reform, the twists and turns of their struggle with the many faces of patriarchy.

I imagine that something similar might be in place for fathers and sons but I cannot speak to it, although I recently read a memoir that was a lovely peek (pique?) into that world: *The Home Stretch: A Father, a Son and All the Things They Never Talk About* by George Ilsley, published 2020. More, perhaps, another time.

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The Times
MINDEN ONTARIO

October 2023 Year in Review

Urgent care extends its hours to 'fill the gap'

The Minden urgent care clinic is now officially open seven days a week, showcasing the need for healthcare alternatives in the community. "Seven days a week was always the plan," said executive director of the Kawartha North Family Health Team Marina Hodson.

Originally opening on June 30 of this year, the clinic was put in motion by the Kawartha North Family Health Team (KNFHT) in an attempt to fill the gap that was made by the sudden closure of the Minden emergency department (ED).

Stay golden, Minden

What started as a sweet and simple idea to adventure enthusiast Johnny Waite, the Golden Gull Water Regatta quickly became an event that kicked off the fall season for the whole community.

"It went really well," he told the *Times* after the big day on Sunday, Oct. 1, "it went well beyond what we were expecting." The event hosted over 200 paddlers, between the ages of 50 and 80 along the Gull River.

The Golden Gull Water Regatta was designed for individuals over the age of 50 to safely participate in a community paddling event. It was organized by locals Johnny Waite and Andrea Hagarty. /TIM YANO

Zilstra acknowledged as Highlander of the Year

When David Zilstra was announced as the Highlander of the Year during the annual Haliburton County Chamber of Commerce Awards on Oct. 20, no one was surprised. Zilstra is seen around the community in everything from Highlands Summer Festival productions to behind the scenes at the Haliburton Highlands Hospital Foundation.

Everyone knows him, but each from a different context. "It would be fair to say that few people are as committed to the Haliburton Highlands as David Zilstra is," reads the first line from his letter of nomination.

The unseasonably warm temperatures seem to be prompting displays of the northern lights across the county. Pictured, photographer Cody Evans snapped a photo of the lights twinkling over the lake. /CODY EVANS

Fort Treehouse Co. climbs the ladder to their next project

Lauren and Cam Graham of Fort Treehouse Co. get the green light to move forward with their newest endeavour; a treehouse retreat in Dahl Forest. "We've got a really great relationship with the Dahl family as well as the Land Trust," shared Lauren, "and we are receiving tremendous support at the county level from Scott Ovell (the director of economic development for the county) and HCDC."

COVID-19 vaccines are a tough find in Haliburton County

Some pharmacies are still waiting for the latest COVID-19 vaccine in Haliburton County.

That's despite the provincial government's advisory to get the needle as soon as possible and assurances that the vaccine would be available by the end of September or beginning of October for vulnerable people health-wise. The HKPR Health Unit issued an advisory Oct. 3 to inform residents that the XBB.1.5 COVID-19 vaccine will be available for those at high risk and those aged 65 years and over.

The Minden Hills Fire Department hosted their annual Fire Prevention Week Open House on Oct. 13 at the Minden Fire Hall. Kids of all ages visited the station to try out the equipment, play games, and learn about fire safety. /TIM YANO

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November 2023 Year in Review

‘Zero options for care in this county’; a look at the great daycare debacle

The challenges of childcare in Haliburton County may be something not everyone witnesses, but they have the potential to completely impact every single demographic and sector in this community. Currently, the waitlist to get into the one registered childcare facility in Minden, Compass Early Learning and Care, has a waitlist of over 270 kids, which is a huge leap from the 40 families waitlisted back in 2018. “Childcare as an industry is at a crisis point,” said Compass supervisor Lindsay Jowett. “The need for childcare has changed exponentially.”

Dimensions offers clinical wellness program to veterans

Dimensions in Algonquin Highlands, a wellness retreat centre, is offering a different approach to veterans with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression by combining psychotherapy and other mind-body practices to help relieve symptoms.

“A common phrase we hear among the participants is, ‘I feel like myself for the first time in a long time,’” said Donald Currie, clinical director at Dimensions.

Large power outage caused by truck

On Nov. 22, nearly 11,700 locals lost power when a large truck hit a pole near the Minden Transmission Station. It was noted that the driver was safe. The outage occurred at 9:50 a.m., and impacted people and businesses from Kennisis Lake to Gooderham, and everywhere in between.

‘Very much needed’; Heat Bank warms up for winter months

It’s that time of year again. The days and nights are getting colder, and the household needs begin to change. This is when the Heat Bank becomes particularly important. “We’ve seen a 27 per cent increase in households needing our help,” said Rachel Gillooly, the client services and volunteer coordinator for the Central Food Network. “That’s 220 calls for assistance, and nearly 340 people.”

Members of the Colour Party salute at the start of the Remembrance Day ceremony in Minden on Saturday. /ADAM FRISK

Right, Brett Fullerton Huskies goalie, #31, celebrates the 5-2 win against the St. Michaels Buzzers. /TIM YANO

Minden Hills Fire Chief Shain Duda waves to the crowd. /EMILY STONEHOUSE

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December 2023 Year in Review

Council says community should have a say in Lochlin facility

Minden Hills has a choice to make regarding re-opening the Lochlin Community Centre.

That is to either repair the existing structure at an estimated cost of $366,000 or to demolish the building and construct a new one at a cost of $600,000. “In terms of remediation ... I guess it is a tear-down and a rebuild,” Mayor Bob Carter said. Hazardous materials including asbestos and lead paint were observed in the facility. That asbestos and lead in the building materials will impact the remediation process and necessitates the use of precautions to ensure worker safety.

Minden restaurant makes top 100 in Canada

Heather Lodge has been owned and operated by Maria and James Jennings for a decade as of Dec. 1, 2034. “We started with the concept of creating a culinary experience, and we are still practicing that same concept, ten years later,” said Maria. This is why it’s no surprise that the lodge was recently named one of the top 100 restaurants in Canada by OpenTable.

Duchene celebrates 1000 games

Matt Duchene has officially played 1000 games in the NHL, and with that milestone, he has taken the time to reflect on how he got to where he is. “Being from Haliburton has been a huge contributor to me making the NHL, and then getting to 1000 games,” he said to the *Times*. “I’m grateful to be from there for so many reasons.”

County council keeps Danielsen as warden

Haliburton County council voted to stay its course and continue with its most familiar warden at the helm. The upper tier council chose to return Algonquin Highlands Mayor Liz Danielsen as warden for another one-year term. She was elected over Minden Hills Mayor Bob Carter.

Santa came to visit Stanhope on Dec. 2 before their annual tree lighting in the evening. /TIM YANO

Brave swimmers took a dip in mid-December during a community cold plunge in Minden. /ADAM FRISK

With vendors from all over Haliburton County and beyond, visitors were sure to find something magical for the season. /ADAM FRISK

The South Lake Pyjama Project launched in later 2023, collecting new garments for folks in need over the holiday season./BRITNEY PAGLIUCA

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Making memories in Minden

THOMAS SMITH

Staff Reporter

I have big shoes to fill. Emily Stonehouse will be going on maternity leave soon and I will be stepping in as her replacement as editor and journalist for the *Minden Times* and *Haliburton Echo*.

My name is Thomas Smith.

While I grew up in Bowmanville, I have always been deeply connected to Minden. My grandparents moved to Minden 20 years ago from the city. I spent my summers here swimming in Twelve Mile Lake, attending a Bible camp on South Lake Road, eating Kawartha Dairy ice cream, swimming in the Gull River, and dipping my feet in the refreshing waters of Ritchie Falls.

Minden has always been a second home for me and my family. This was quite literal for the beginning of my life, as my family owned a home in Lochlin.

Catching grasshoppers in the baseball diamond and playing at Lochlin Community Centre are memories that have stuck with me throughout my life. Even recently, hearing about the state of Lochlin Community Centre hurts my soul. However, I am certain that the community will heal, and the love that we have for Lochlin Community Centre will keep it, in one form or another, a landmark of Lochlin. Sadly, due to unforeseen circumstances, we were forced to sell our house in Lochlin.

However, during the pandemic, my family returned. They decided to move from Bowmanville to a house on Bobcaygeon Road in Minden. I like to think of myself as a transplanted local, with my roots being firmly set for many, many years. I love Haliburton County and the communities that live here.

To learn some things about me, I attended the University of Guelph for the past six years. While in University, I have written for student publications, written biographies on female Victorian authors published through Oxford University Press, published a radio play, and honed my love and craft for all things literary, historical, and theatrical.

Recently, I have graduated with a Master's degree in history with a thesis project involving creating a virtual reality video game based on pageant celebrations of London, England in the 1600s.

Prepare yourselves for a year of articles that dig deep in local histories, and we can learn things about the history of our beautiful community together. I hope to raise the volume of marginalized voices and highlight the wonderful businesses and characters that call Haliburton County home.

When I am not writing, taking photos, or hunting the latest scoop, you can find me fishing on the beautiful lakes and shopping at my favorite businesses such as Thrift Warehouse, Mixtape Vintage, Russell Red Records, and the Little Tart.

My happy place is on a serene walk along Minden's boardwalk or when I am petting my cat, Leyla. I love all types of music, ranging from Weird Al Yankovic to heavy metal (wear your ear protection kids!).

I realize that as a newcomer to Haliburton County, some of you may not have met me already, but I am beyond excited to become closer with my community. If you see me in the area, do not be a stranger to say hi, chat me up, or send me your ideas for the hottest scoop.

My door is always open and welcomes you in. You can also reach me through email at thomas@haliburtonpress.com.

Thank you for allowing me to be a voice for the community. Much love.

Raising the roof with Razz

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**

Editor

Get ready, Haliburton County, it's about to get loud.

The Merry Marching Band are making their way from Quebec on Feb. 11 to grace the stage at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion with Razzamataz Kids' shows. "This is an incredible musical clownish performance. The show features clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, tuba and drums," said Nicole Stewart, the chair for Razz.

Featuring some delightfully quirky and colourful characters, the Merry Marching Band portrays the story of exploring the world through music, sounds, and people. The concept is designed for a younger audience, with an educational component of incorporating geography and world music. The performers intend to introduce the young audience to the beauty of brass instruments and percussion, while taking them on a journey through clown arts.

"These are award winning performers," said Stewart, "and I really think that people will love the humour, clowning and music that accompanies the Merry Marching Band's journey around, and out of this world."

The Merry Marching Band will be making their Haliburton County debut on Feb. 11 at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion. Tickets are available at www.razzamataz.ca. /Photo submitted

If you're not able to make the performance on Feb. 11, Razzamataz will be hosting a workshop on Feb. 11 at the Haliburton School of Art and Design, featuring band members who will provide the opportunity for kids to explore wind and percussion instruments. The hour-long workshop is designed for ages five and up, and will kick off at 11 a.m.

Razzamataz continues to seek out performances that will leave local audiences wowed, with the next show slated for March 24, and featuring two-time Canadian Magic Champion, Eric Le Clerc, who will be putting on "a fun and feel good magic show," said Stewart.

The following show is set for April 27, where Razz will present the Dancers of Damelahamid with the Indigenous Dance performance, Spirit and Tradition. This show includes dramatic dance, intricate masks and elaborate regalia. Through drumming, soundscape and projected imagery, audiences will find themselves immersed in the vibrant Indigenous culture of the British Columbia Northwest Coast.

Tickets can be purchased at the door, but to buy in advance, visit www.razzamataz.ca.

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The Times
MINDEN ONTARIO

Grooming for good

For the second year in a row, the Haliburton County Snowmobile Association has selected Haliburton Highlands Health Services as its charity of the year. The HCSA will donate one dollar per hour trail grooming time on the Rail Trail to the hospital's Diabetes Network. Monies raised will go towards the purchase of a doppler, a device that measures blood flow helping those with diabetes recieve improved care. This is the fourth winter the HCSA has supported a local charity. Earlier recipients were the Kelly Shires Breast Cancer Foundation and the Minden Food Bank. Snowmobilers and others will see a mobile billboard in tow behind a trail groomer this winter on the Rail Trail, HCSA's busiest route. The Haliburton County Snowmobile Association is a volunteer owned and managed not for profit maintaining 370 kilometers of trails linking our communities. They deliver up to 14.7 million dollars in economic activity per season. The HCSA is a proud partner in the 183 member Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs. /Photo submitted

Storm U13 make history

by **MIKE GERVAIS**
Special to the Times

For the first time in the history of the Highland Storm, the International Silver Stick Trophy is coming to rest in the Haliburton Highlands. The Walker's Heating and Cooling U13 Rep Team swept into Forest, Ontario, to bring home Silver Stick glory and win one of North America's most prominent minor hockey tournaments.

The team secured the elusive title with a 4-0 victory over the Arran-Elderslie IceDogs. The team used their speed and high-pressure play to dominate the game and erase any doubt over who the champions would be. Goals by Travis Rowe (2), Chase Kerr and Henry Neilson fueled the victory. Neilson and Rowe were joined by Hawksley Dobbins (F) and Blake Hutchinson (G) in being named players of the game.

The victory comes on the heels of an undefeated preliminary round with wins over four other Regional Champions - the Frontenac Flyers, West Niagara Flying Aces, Dresden Jr Ice Kings and the Columbus Blue Jackets.

The Storm U13s also went undefeated in their Silver Stick Regional tournament to finish the multi-level tournament 9-0.

This victory provides redemption to head coach Scott Neilson, who exited last year's International contest with a narrow loss in the semi-finals. Coaches James Reilly, Shawn Walker, and trainer Marcus Rowe supported Neilson in preparing the small yet speedy squad. Manager Cynthia Hutchinson ensured the team had everything they needed leading to the tournament to remove distractions and provide focus.

All team members served a critical role in the victories and stepped up to forecheck, backcheck, set up goals or stand ready to move into a more significant role if needed. Players included Hudson Meyer (D), Levi Rowe (D), Tyler Hughes (D), Cruise Neave (F), Lyla Degeer (F), Linus Gervais (F), Marshall Heasman (G), Jaxon Hurd (F) and Brycen Harrison (F).

The 2024 International Silver Stick banners will hang in the Minden and Haliburton arenas to represent memories of a lifetime for the team. Go Storm!

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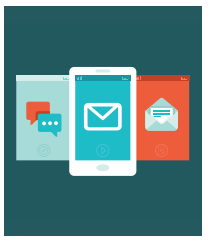

Have a thought, comment or opinion you'd like to share?

Send a letter to the editor to thomas@haliburtonpress.com

Ingoldsby United Church closes, amalgamating with Haliburton United

by THOMAS SMITH
Times Staff

It is with a heavy heart to say that Ingoldsby United Church held its last service on Dec. 31, 2023.

"Welcome everybody, thank you for coming today," opened Reverend Harry Morgan. "It's nice to have a full church on this, our last day." Ingoldsby United Church's last sermon was filled with high spirits, despite the church's uncertain future.

The United Church was built in 1928, closing just four years shy of the 100th anniversary.

"This is the last Sunday of this church's long history. Almost a hundred years of service to the Lord and the community," said Morgan solemnly.

"Some of us have been shedding a few tears about this end of an era here. Sort of, many things are beyond our control I think. We don't know. The world has changed a lot," said Morgan, "the inclination for people to go to churches and participate in church is just not what it was."

"One thing to remember is when this was built back in 1928, there weren't a lot of people with cars. It was still the horse and buggy days. My Mum was two then. In her early days, cars were few and far between." Morgan explained that the churches were built in the area without transportation in mind. Circuit riders would ride on horseback from church to church.

Ingoldsby United churchs stands empty after it's final sermon on Dec. 31, 2023. /THOMAS SMITH Staff

The message of the Dec. 31 sermon was 'Changin' Times'. Rev. Morgan refers to the wise words of Bob Dylan's *The Times They Are a-Changin*'. During his sermon, Morgan discussed topics such as climate change and the changing political climates across the world. All of these, he says, have contributed to the reduction of church attendance across Canada. Morgan estimates roughly 10 to 20 per cent of people attend in recent years.

"We had five to seven people attending, which is kind of what we ended with," recollects Morgan says with a laugh. When he began with the Haliburton Pastoral Charge in 1992, numbers were also dwindling. Later, the maximum attendance of Ingoldsby United grew to around 25 people. The church's congregation fluctuated throughout the years but was greatly appreciated by the community, with the building even acting as the town's community centre.

In recent years, the COVID-19 pandemic put an end to the church's Sunday school program, and Morgan says that the church tried its best to maintain attendance while adhering to the safety procedures during the pandemic. While not the sole culprit, Morgan says it certainly accelerated the decision to sell Ingoldsby United Church.

"It's the social trends of people not participating in church. In the church world, we call it postmodernism, or post christendom," explains Morgan.

As of Jan. 1, 2024, the congregation of Ingoldsby United Church has amalgamated with Haliburton United Church.

Elder Karen from the Haliburton United Church took the podium to welcome the congregation of Ingoldsby United to Haliburton United with open hearts and open arms.

"I can't imagine not having your church in your community, but I know God is a big, big God and he covers all communities and we sincerely welcome everybody from this church to Haliburton United," says Karen warmly, "I can't express it more wholeheartedly than what our Jesus said was to come. So please come and if you need a way to get there, you may contact the church."

> "Some of us have been shedding a few tears about this end of an era here. Sort of, many things are beyond our control I think"
> — REVEREND HARRY MORGAN

When asked about his thoughts of the last sermon, Morgan recalls it as being bittersweet.

"I enjoyed it. It was exciting to have 60 people there that day. After lunch, everyone left except the Ingoldsby people. So I saw myself sobbing on the way home. It's a grieving process. It's hitting them pretty hard."

Rev. Morgan took great joy in ringing Ingoldsby United's bell every morning at 8:45 a.m., especially in the summer months when he knew cottagers would be woken up to the call of their congregation. He hopes that the final sermon will bring folks in the community closure.

"The building will be sold. It will be listed very soon," said Rev. Morgan, in regard to the future of Ingoldsby United Church. Proceeds from the sale will pay for things such as utilities, upkeep costs, and real estate fees. A percentage of funds will help support the Haliburton Pastoral Charge.

Morgan says that there are intentions of having a decommission service after the spring to include seasonal visitors of Ingoldsby United Church, but a date has yet to be determined.

There is still hope for Ingoldsby United Church to remain a part of the community. In the 1990s to early 2000's, the iconic 12 Mile Lake Church dwindled in numbers while the trustees of Zion United and members of the Chambers family maintained the church. In 2009, the Township of Minden Hills purchased 12 Mile Lake Church and partnered with Friends of 12 Mile Lake Church to provide care and maintenance. In November of 2021, The Country Bakery moved into the former Zion United Church and now uses the former house of worship as their bakery and retail space.

Morgan attests the long history of the church to his belief in Jesus Christ and through the support of the local community.

Sudoku brought to you by

SUDOKU

9					5	7	4	6
7								2
		5		4	6			
		1	6	7				3
	8			3			2	9
								5
3					1	2		7
			8			9		
							1	

Level: Intermediate

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Answers on page 15

Strike!

On Jan. 24, the Haliburton County Red Wolves Special Olympics team took on the Haliburton County Huskies in their annual bowling tournament. Left, Jason Hollowell of the Red Wolves takes a shot during the game against the Huskies. /TIM YANO special to the *Times*

SUDOKU SOLUTION

9	1	3	2	8	5	7	4	6
7	6	4	3	1	9	8	5	2
8	2	5	7	4	6	3	9	1
5	9	1	6	7	2	4	8	3
6	8	7	5	3	4	1	2	9
4	3	2	1	9	8	6	7	5
3	4	8	9	5	1	2	6	7
1	5	6	8	2	7	9	3	4
2	7	9	4	6	3	5	1	8

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NOTICE OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETINGS – 2024 BUDGET

The Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills is preparing its 2024 Municipal Budget. These meetings will be held in the Minden Hills Council Chambers located on 7 Milne Street, Minden, On. Meetings to commence at 9:00 AM. Any change in location, date, or time will be advertised.

Council commenced its overview of the Draft Budget and Business Plan at the January 18, 2024 Special Meeting.

Council will consider the 2024 Draft Budget and Business Plan at several upcoming meetings

- **Thursday, February 1, 2024**: Operating and Capital Budget review for the Fire Department; Public Works Department; and Water/Wastewater.

  The Adoption of the Water and Sewer rates will be considered at the February 1, 2024 meeting; however, the bylaws are to be passed at the following February 8, 2024 Regular Council meeting.

- **Monday, February 5, 2024**: Operating and Capital Budget review for the Community Services Department; Planning and Building Departments, and Administration Department.

- **Tuesday, March 5, 2024**: Potential date to Adopt and finalize the 2024 Budget.

Please note that dates are subject to change and are dependent on deliberation discussion and direction of Council.

Supported material including the Budget Book will be provided on the agenda package located on the CivicWeb portal site.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Greg Bedard
Director of Finance/Treasurer
(705) 286-1260 Ext 504
gbedard@mindenhills.ca

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Call To Enter- The Tour De Forest summer art tour is looking for a variety of participants in both studio artists and guest artists. Please download application from haliburtontourdeforest.com. Deadline is February 16 2024. For more information contact Lori at **705-754-0444** or **tourdeforestjurying@gmail.com**

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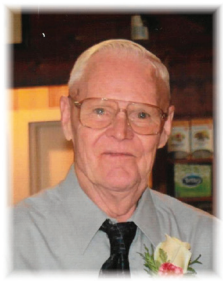

In Loving Memory of

Junior Elwood Barry

Passed away peacefully at Extendicare, Haliburton on January 27, 2024 in his 92nd year.

Beloved husband of Lois. Dear father of Elwood and his wife Joanne, Craig and Kim. Loving grandpa of Janice (Richard), Devon (Katie), and predeceased by Kyle and great grandpa of Hannah, Louis, Lila and Austin. Dear brother of Mervin (Lois), Gwen (Murray Bacon – deceased) and predeceased by Della, Myrtle and Joyce. Dear brother-in-law of Beverly, Marlin and Verne, Karl and Terry, Bernice and Keith, predeceased by Morgan, Murray, Bernard, Allan and Linda. Lovingly remembered by the Barry and Upton families. The Barry family would like to thank everyone at the Extendicare for the care and love given over the years.

Friends are invited to the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., 127 Bobcaygeon Rd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0 on Thursday February 1st, 2024 at 11:00am until the time of the Service to Celebrate Junior's Life at 1:00pm. Reception to follow in the Monk-Cray Family Centre at the funeral home. Spring Interment at Maple Lake Cemetery.

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A SHOWER OF PENNIES: It arrived mostly in pennies, but there were also some loonies, nickels and dimes in the buckets, when the students of Archie Stouffer Elementary school were challenged to collect loose change for the Haliburton Highlands Health Service Foundation Capital Campaign. The project, co-ordinated by the Junior Kindergarten classes, resulted in students scouring kitchen counter tops, dressers and searching behind sofa cushions to gather a donation of $617.24, or almost a dollar a student. The penny collection was held in conjunction with the one hundredth day of the school year. School Principal Rosie Kenney topped up the donation with a pledge of ten cents for every dollar raised, while the senior students added $118 raised at their Valentine's Day dance. Surrounded by the members of the Junior Kindergarten classes, parent volunteer Cheri Hicks and JK student Dakotah Francis last week presented Foundation Chair Gord Monk with a pail filled with the proceeds.

$5.1 M approved for SSFC expansion

"We're getting a new campus," said Brian Desbiens, enthusiastically.

The president of Sir Sandford Fleming College was referring to the announcement from the Ontario Ministry of Education of $27.45-million in funding for Fleming campuses in Peterborough, Lindsay and Haliburton.

Haliburton's share is $5.1-million, which will go toward the construction of a new campus in the village.

"It's terrific news," Desbiens said.

Those thoughts were repeated by Barb Bolin, campus operations leader in Haliburton. "This is wonderful news," she stated. "It will be great to be able to consolidate all of our courses under one roof."

Desbiens noted that the college will have to do some fund-raising as well, but he added, "It's going to happen and that is very exciting."

The municipality of Dysart et al will be a partner in the venture. It is donating the land for the new campus, a small section of Glebe Park. Details are still being worked out to make sure the other park features, such as snowmobile and Nordic ski trails aren't adversely affected. The Dysart contribution of the land and municipal services will be included as part of the public portion of the expansion. A study is currently under way to determine the area's capacity for fund-raising.

Plans for a new campus in Haliburton have been in the works for some time, but the funds had not been com

(more on page 3)

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